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Parenthood, Professorship, and Librarianship: Are They Mutually Exclusive?

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TITLE: Parenthood, Professorship and Librarianship: Are They Mutually Exclusive?

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ABSTRACT:

A survey of tenure-track and tenured librarians at ARL libraries provides data on the relationship between parenthood and professorship. Results analyze the impact of the promotion and tenure process on child-bearing and rearing decisions. Discrepancies are found based on gender, tenure status and family status.

Introduction

“Tenure track faculty in the libraries are expected to come to work 40 hrs a week (on the clock). We aren’t nearly as flexible as the rest of the university faculty because we are a service organization, so once you add families into this already over-extended day you see problems for women, who are usually the primary care-givers.”

“While I am not certain, I think I would have had more time to develop friendships and enter into a marital relationship that led to having a child---if I had steered clear of this tenure-track position. I blew it!”

~Comments from surveys

Despite legislation such as the *Family Medical Leave Act*¹ and recent political platforms based on “family values”, the comments above illustrate the continuing controversy over career and family life. Survey respondents, all tenured or tenure-track librarians, expressed strong opinions regarding the role that child-bearing and child-rearing should have on librarianship and the ability to successfully negotiate the tenure process.

Women in tenure-track positions in many disciplines are speaking out about the pressures of child-rearing while pursuing academic careers. Some are even postponing child-bearing during the tenure process, in the belief that academia and parenthood are mutually exclusive. Most of the attention on this issue has focused on traditional academic faculty positions, i.e. the teaching professor. The academic workload of librarians can be quite different from that of a traditional faculty member, with many librarians keeping a standard forty hour work week, running the daily activities of libraries, and not enjoying the freedom of passage granted to teaching faculty. Yet faculty librarians still share in the burden of research, publication, and service during the tenure process. The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions: How many academic librarians have young children during the tenure-track years and are any of them deliberately postponing children due to the rigors of promotion and tenure? Are there gender differences related to child-bearing and child-rearing and the tenure-track process in a female dominated profession? This is a particularly important question for librarians to answer. How are faculty librarians coping with tenure and family life?

This study presents results from a survey of tenured and tenure-track ARL librarians. Data provide insight on librarians' attitudes toward tenure and its relationship to parenthood. Descriptive comments also shed light on how some tenure-track librarians are coping. Exploration of this issue will hopefully lead to a constructive dialogue in the profession and a more conducive and supportive environment for librarians and parents.

Literature Review

In 1974, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) issued a statement “Leaves of Absence for Child-Bearing, Child-Rearing, and Family Emergencies” addressing the concerns of establishing healthy work-family relationships in the academic community.² The statement advocates equal rights, regardless of gender, age, family status, or marital status for academics to fulfill family responsibilities, including child-bearing and –rearing responsibilities. The spirit of the principles is to provide “sufficient” flexibility through practices such as allowing long term and short term paid and unpaid leaves, flexible scheduling, institutional support systems, and stoppage of the tenure clock. Due to changes in social, legal, and environmental changes in academia, the AAUP issued an amended statement in 2001, “Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work” that is now association policy, stresses that institutional policies and environments should permit faculty members not to choose between but to “combine” family and career responsibilities in the manner “best suited” to professionals and parents.³ The importance of having formal written policies were also stressed to prevent any preconceived bias. The statement also cited the following information to make a clear distinction between child-bearing and rearing responsibilities and other family care needs”

“The conflict between work and family obligations that many faculty members experience is more acute for women faculty than for men. Giving birth and raising children are distinctive events. Only women give birth, and it is an event that interrupts the career of a higher percentage of professors than any other “physical disability” or family obligation. Eighty-seven percent of women become parents during their working lives. Pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing are also age-

related, and most commonly occur during the same years that college faculty are seeking tenure in their jobs. Although many men take substantial responsibilities for the care of children, the reality is that women still assume more responsibility for child rearing than do men.”⁴

Despite the AAUP’s efforts in the early seventies, the tension between parenthood and academic careers continues. Two leading names in the study of family life and academe are Marc Goulden and Mary Ann Mason, both of University of California, Berkeley. Together, Goulden and Mason have published numerous articles; most notably *Do Babies Matter?*⁵ Their study shows that women who had children during their PhD programs or the five years following their PhDs were less likely to gain tenure. Meanwhile, their male counterparts who had children during the same years did not experience the same fate. In addition, they found, “Married women with children were far more likely than others to cite children as one of the reasons they changed their career goals away from academe, and they were the most likely to indicate that balancing career and family was a source of high stress for them.”⁶

Young and Wright studied 22 tenure-track professor/mothers in the field of social work.⁷ Most notably, they found while survey respondents believed standards for tenure were the same for women as for their male colleagues, motherhood changed the way they experienced the tenure process. Women often felt pulled between their respective roles as mothers and professors, “feeling inadequate in one or both roles...” They often had to contend with the negative connotation of motherhood in the academic environment.⁸

Finkel, et. all surveyed full, associate and assistant professors at the University of Washington in early 1990s.⁹ Finkel concluded that "there is a glaring disparity between what faculty believe and what faculty do concerning the critical issue of caring for infants." Their study showed that while a majority recognized the value and necessity of maternity leave, very few actually took full advantage of their university's paid sick leave or infant care policies. They found; "a majority of the faculty reported that taking time off for infant care would hurt them professionally, even if they were already tenured, and that they would be pressured by their department to return to work after the birth of an infant."¹⁰

Some institutions are taking steps to ensure that parenthood does not preclude some faculty members from successful tenured careers. Common practice at many institutions is the tenure extension or temporary tenure clock stoppage. A recent survey of 27 academic institutions administered by the American Council on Education found "... almost all allow young faculty members to stop the tenure clock after the birth of a baby. Thirty-seven percent allow it to be stopped for one year, 41 percent for two years, and 22 percent for three years."¹¹ While these policies may exist, the same article reports that many faculty are not aware of them nor take advantage of them. In fact, a recent Princeton University task force found that many female faculty were reluctant to apply for tenure extensions, for fear of being seen as weak or inadequate by their colleagues, or as having received special treatment.¹² On the recommendation of the task force, tenure extensions were made automatic for the birth or adoption of a child, while allowing

faculty to take early tenure if they did not want the extension. Interestingly, the tenure stoppage at Princeton is mandatory for both male and female faculty.

While not expressly targeted at the issue of tenure and parenthood, a survey of flexible work arrangements in ARL libraries was conducted in a 1992 ARL SPEC Kit. The survey found that while flexible work arrangements were present at a vast majority of ARL libraries, the rate of participation was small.¹³ The SPEC Kit includes sample policies and documents from various ARL library which employ flextime, job sharing, leaves, phased retirement, and tenure clock stoppage. Other practices in use by universities include university day-care facilities, half-time appointments, and support groups. Still, many young faculty parents continue to practice the “tough-it-out” method, trying to balance faculty workloads and family life.

While debate rages over tenure and family life in academia, librarians have remained relatively silent. Perhaps the controversial nature of tenure in librarianship is to blame. The profession is divided on the necessity of tenured faculty status for academic librarians, some arguing that tenure benefits the profession as well as the professional, while others consider tenure as an unnecessary hurdle.¹⁴ Many support tenure for librarians but consider it impractical since the daily activities of librarianship often consume a typical forty hour week, leaving little time for the research efforts needed to achieve or retain academic faculty status on most campuses. If the profession can not agree on the issue of faculty status for librarians, it is unlikely to turn its attention toward issues such as balancing tenure requirements and parenthood. The fact that the

profession has failed to study the issue, however, makes it no less important. Because librarianship is a feminized profession, the issue of motherhood and tenure is even more salient. The 04/05 *ARL Annual Salary Survey* reported 35.6% of ARL professional librarians are male, while 64.37% are female.¹⁵ While this data does not differentiate tenure-track from non-tenure-track librarians, it is reasonable to assume from the data available that females hold the majority of tenure-track positions, in contrast to most academic disciplines. If the majority of tenure-track librarians are women, then the issue of motherhood and tenure becomes one of particular significance to the field. It would follow that librarianship should be a leader in the areas of gender equality, equity and parental support.

Despite the dominance of women in the field, little is written in the library literature on the topic. Cramer and Boyd published a short, advisory piece that outlines coping strategies for tenure-track librarians dealing with young children or thinking about having a child.¹⁶ They encourage tenure-track parents to ask for flexible scheduling, obtain supervisor support and any support from the library community, be aware of legal rights, and form parent support groups. In addition, they advise those thinking about having children not to delay until the “perfect” time, as that time may never arise.¹⁷ While the article offers practical and much needed advice, more empirical research on tenure-status and parenthood in the profession is needed. It would be unwise to rely on studies of tenure status and parenthood undertaken by other disciplines, since the workload and environment of academic librarianship is so often different from that of other academic disciplines.

Two notable studies have explored the issue of academic librarianship and gender roles. In 1985, Betty Jo Irvine studied patterns of sex segregation in librarianship, specifically the careers of academic library administrators.¹⁸ In a survey of ARL directors, she found that male directors were more likely to have children than their female counterparts. They were also more likely to have two or more children.¹⁹ She states, “Although less of a deterrent to careers than in the past, the presence of, or prospect of children, may still affect a woman’s career aspirations more than a man’s.”²⁰ She also found that female directors tended to have older children, suggesting that their academic careers as directors came after child-bearing and early child-rearing years.²¹

Zemon and Bahr build on the earlier work of Irvine, studying the relationship between academic library directors and motherhood.²² They surveyed female academic library directors and found that 64.8% reported that motherhood “did not influence their advancement” in their careers.²³ Interestingly, they also found the majority of respondents felt that they had achieved their career goals and that having a supportive partner was the most significant factor in successfully balancing home and work life. Maternity leave and other benefits did not rate highly as factors in attaining career goals.²⁴ For the minority who reported dissatisfaction with career goals, a large percentage said motherhood had affected their careers.²⁵

While Irvine and Zemon and Bahr present a much needed study of career advancement and motherhood, they do not specifically address the issue of tenure. Their data is

relevant since many ARL libraries offer faculty status to their librarians. It follows that many of the research subjects in both studies would have also been laboring in the tenure system. However, limiting the study to female directors means that only the successful women were included in the data. In institutions where librarians are faculty, librarians must usually achieve tenure before aspiring to directorships. Therefore to gain an understanding of the influence of motherhood on a female librarian's career, it is necessary to study women in the earlier phases of their careers.

The current study builds upon the existing literature, addressing the need for research on the relationship between tenure and parenthood for librarians; therefore this study attempts to gather data from both tenured and tenure-track librarians and includes responses from both a female and male perspective.

Methodology

The intent of this study is to investigate how librarians view the tenure system in relation to child-bearing and child-rearing decisions. To that extent, it was important to target only those librarians in tenured or tenure-track positions. Because of the highly personal nature of the topic, the study called for an anonymous type of data collection. The survey method was judged most appropriate to the task.

Two surveys were designed, one for librarians with children and one for those without. Two distinct surveys were necessary due to the limitations of the web-based survey software used, and so that correlations could be made between family decisions and

feelings regarding tenure. Each survey was given a unique web address and corresponding URL links labeled appropriately. Two respondents indicated that they were currently pregnant. Both completed the survey for those with children and their data are included in the corresponding results.

Questions varied slightly between the two surveys, since some questions did not apply to one group or the other. Survey questions were designed to gather both closed and open question data. For quantitative data, e.g. demographic data, closed question format was used. In addition, 5 point Likert-like scales were used to gather data about respondents' opinions of the tenure process in relation to child-bearing and child-rearing decisions. Open comment boxes were also included so that participants could share experiences and anecdotal information. Answers from those questions were summed to be used for further analysis.

Once the surveys were developed, ARL libraries that offer tenure and tenure-track librarian positions were identified. Identification of these libraries was somewhat problematic, necessitating the use of several methods. Most often, librarian status could be determined from information on library or university websites. When websites proved insufficient, library personnel offices or administrative offices were phoned and asked to provide the status of their librarians. Virtual reference services were used in some cases. Job postings via listservs and *C&RL News* job postings on ALA's website also provided information regarding tenure status at various libraries. In total, 35 libraries were clearly identified as offering tenure-track, faculty positions.

Library deans or directors for each of the 35 libraries were contacted via email and asked to distribute the web addresses for the surveys to their tenured and tenure-track librarians. They were sent a reminder message three weeks following the initial request. The library directors' participation was voluntary and they were provided an option to indicate that they did not wish librarians at their institution to participate. Only one library director actively opted out of the study. Because no identifying information about the respondents or institutions was gathered, it is unclear how many libraries are represented by the survey data. While not knowing which libraries are represented is regrettable, protecting the anonymity of the respondents and the integrity of their answers was a larger concern. Hopefully, the anonymity of the survey ensured that respondents felt free to provide open and frank answers about their tenure process.

Both surveys opened for data collection on November 1, 2005 and closed on January 1, 2006. Participation was voluntary. A response rate cannot be calculated since the surveys were not sent to a specified number of participants.

Statistical data from the surveys was compiled by the web survey generator and exported to SPSS for analysis. In order to analyze differences of librarians' perceptions regarding the tenure process in relation to child-bearing and child-rearing decisions, this study used descriptive statistics and t-test analysis. Survey responses involving open-text comments were exported to an Excel spreadsheet and coded for recurring themes. Those themes were numbered and counted.

Results and Discussion

The number of responses was generous with 280 surveys returned. Of those, 264 met the criteria for being in a tenure-track or tenured position. The distribution between tenure-track and tenured respondents was even at 49% and 51% respectively. Many studies of tenure and family life focus heavily on motherhood and neglect to study the impact on the father. The request for participation in this study encouraged both male and female librarians to respond. The notable male response (24%) allowed for a gender analysis of the data.

Demographic Data

Both male and female librarians participated in the survey. Not surprisingly, female respondents made up 76% of the total and men 24%. The majority of respondents, 66%, were married, 25% were single, and 9% divorced. There was no distinction in the survey to differentiate same-sex relationships from heterosexual relationships. Librarians over 51+ years were the largest age group with 37% reporting. Ages 31-35 ranked next with 19%; ages 36-40 and 46-50 both had 13%; ages 41-45 had 11%; ages 26-30 had 7%; and the youngest group, 25 and younger, had only one respondent. Less than half (43%) of respondents reported having children. Most of these had one (39%) or two (45%) children. Another 14% had three children and only two respondents had four or more children.

Tenure and Young Children

Those with children were asked to indicate how many children they had ages 0-6 during their tenure-track years (e.g. the five to six years preceding tenure). Dividing N by the total number of respondents gives an indication of the number of librarians who had young children during the tenure-track process, only 27%. The majority of those had one child (14%), another 10% had two children, and six respondents had three children (2%). A few respondents indicated that they were pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant during their tenure-track years (1%). Pregnant respondents completed the survey for those with children. Chart 1 depicts the frequencies and percentages of those who had children ages 0-6 during their tenure-track years.

[Insert Chart 1 here]

A gender difference existed among those who had younger children during the tenure-track years, with mothers comprising 19% and fathers 8%. Men with younger children were more likely to be tenured than their female colleagues. Over 43% of the tenured male faculty had children ages 0-6 during their tenure-track years, while only 25% of the tenured female faculty reported having young children during their tenure-track process.

P&T and Child Bearing Decisions

Those with children were asked if promotion and tenure had an impact on their decision to have children and if they postponed having children due to the constraints of promotion and tenure. Overall, results indicated child-bearing decisions were not impacted by P&T considerations ($M=2.17$). However, male and female faculty showed a statistically significant difference ($t=2.21, p<.05$) as shown in Table1. Female faculty

reported that their decision to have children was impacted by P&T more strongly than their male colleagues. Additionally, gender analysis shows that all respondents who chose to postpone having children due to P&T considerations were female (n=10). Four respondents, 4%, also indicated that they were postponing having additional children due to the constraints of promotion and tenure, three females and one male.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Impact of Family Status on P&T

Survey data identified a distinct group of forty librarians who had children ages 0-6 while working toward P&T and are now tenured. These respondents were asked about their perceptions of having children after receiving P&T. They were also asked to reflect upon their perceptions of having children while they were tenure-track. Separate questions were asked to discover if their perceptions of having children had changed pre and post tenure. Gender difference in the perceptions was also analyzed. Data analysis is represented in Tables 2 and 3.

The same group reported feeling more strongly that children were a hindrance when they were tenure-track. After successfully gaining P&T, their perception of children as a hindrance to gaining P&T decreased. The difference was statistically significant ($t=2.82$, $p<.01$). The large degree of difference between pre and post P&T perception may be an indicator that tenure-track librarians have a measure of unease about child-bearing and child-rearing decisions that their tenured colleagues may have also experienced, but do not or no longer share.

[Insert Table 2 here]

Gender analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' perception of children as a hindrance before obtaining P&T ($t=2.15, p<.05$) while the perception post P&T showed no statistical gender difference (Table 3). The gender dissimilarity in perception pre-P&T indicates that female librarians tend to feel more strongly than their male colleagues that child-bearing and child-rearing will negatively impact their ability to successfully negotiate the promotion and tenure process.

This particular group consisted of librarians who were already tenured. The lack of statistically significant difference in perceptions post-P&T, therefore, may not be representative. All had successfully obtained promotion and/or tenure and therefore may be less likely to report that child-bearing and rearing was a hindrance.

[Insert Table 3 here]

Family Leave Programs, Gender Differences, and Institutional Support

Survey participants were asked a series of questions regarding their perceptions of family leave programs, gender and difficulties in the P&T process, gender and institutional support, and the need for modification of support programs. Perceptions were compared in terms of respondents' gender, family status and tenure status. Results are shown in Table 4.

Tenure-track faculty's perception that using their institution's family leave programs could be a disadvantage in the P&T process was stronger than that of tenured faculty ($M=2.84, 2.57$ respectively). The difference was statistically significant ($t=-2.26, p<.05$). However, no statistical difference was found dependent on gender or family status. Results imply tenure-track faculty are apprehensive about utilizing their institution's family leave programs. Further study is needed to compare tenure outcomes of those that did and did not take advantage of family leave programs in order to distinguish if this apprehension is justified.

Respondents were asked if female faculty with children have more difficulty gaining P&T than their male colleagues with children. Faculty who had children ages 0-6 during their P&T process agreed more strongly with this statement than those without children ($M=3.59, 3.10$ respectively). The difference was statistically significant ($t=-3.13, p<.01$). No statistical differences, however, were found between male and female respondents or between tenured and tenure-track respondents. A follow-up question asked if female faculty who choose to have children should receive more support than their male colleagues. Overall, there was little support for this idea ($M=2.59$); while there was recognition by some that female faculty with children have more difficulty obtaining P&T, there was no consensus that female faculty should receive additional institutional support.

Respondents were then asked if the P&T system should be modified to support faculty who choose to have children, regardless of gender. Differences in perception were found

dependant on both family status and tenure status. Tenure-track faculty and faculty who had children ages 0-6 during their P&T years more strongly supported modification of the P&T system than their tenured colleagues or faculty librarians with no children. The differences were statistically significant ($t=-3.35, p<.001$; $t=2.76, p<.01$). No statistical difference was found based on gender.

[Insert Table 4 here]

Open Comments

The survey offered opportunities for respondents to present descriptive comments. Over 60% of those with children participated in open comments and 34% without children. Recurring themes were present in both groups.

The majority agreed that having children during the tenure process was demanding and that a familial or spousal support system was necessary for success. Over half indicated the need to prioritize and choose between family interests and career interests, some even mentioning feelings of guilt and remorse for their choices. As one respondent expressed sadly, “While I started my job, my son was barely a year old. My concern is that I have been relatively occupied the past couple of years and have missed important steps in his development. My son will be seven years old by the time I’m tenure, and I fear missing out on those first seven years.”

Approximately thirty comments from those with and without children expressed a need for institutional support and policies to prevent discrimination against parents. There was equal concern with gender equity in policy and procedure.

“... I believe in equity. For instance, if the man wants to stay home instead of the childbearer, then I think the man should be able to receive whatever support (i.e. modified tenure system, family leave, etc.) as the woman. I also think women who decide to have children should not have to modify their life due to some university policy, or the lack thereof.”

There were a few respondents who felt any policy or procedures favoring parents unduly discriminated against non-parents.

“People with children tend to have more privileges than those without at my university. I am frequently expected to work on school holidays so that those with children can stay home...While I greatly respect the commitment these staff have given to raising their children and the importance of that, I feel that the courtesies extended to parents are sometimes unfair to those of us without children.”

While there was considerable agreement that mothers and fathers deserved equal consideration, several respondents pointed out that mothers bear the physical burden of giving birth, breast-feeding, and primary care responsibilities as illustrated by the following statement; “I agree that they have more difficulty gaining promotion and/or tenure because of pregnancy and post-partum recovery. This physical difference

seriously affects energy levels as well as the emotional pull to focus on child care more than male parents would be affected.”

A few comments, mostly from those with children, indicated a perception of bias against parents, particularly mothers. “Some faculty members who review tenure applications (usually male but not always) view women as less serious about their work if they (the women applying for tenure) have kids.” Another respondent states; “...I have also experienced a continuing bias against me even though my youngest child is not two. There is a perception that one cannot be a committed faculty member and a responsible parent at the same time.”

Flexible scheduling was considered necessary by both those with and without children as a means to dealing with family needs, be it an ailing parent or child. Several respondents brought up the inconsistency between the forty-hour work week of librarians and the more flexible scheduling afforded to other academic faculty with nine month contracts.

“Here’s a (the) problem. Tenure and Promotion requirements haven’t hurt terribly among teaching faculty. But, teaching faculty (here) have 9 month contract equal in pay to library faculty 12 month salaries. We’ve insufficient sanctioned time to meet requirements. That means that librarians dig into their own time more so than other faculty. Librarian should not be tenured or they should receive equal pay to facilitate day care expenses.”

Finally, some comments indicated that parenthood should not be a factor in any promotion and tenure process and/or librarians should not be in tenure-track positions.

Limitations and Further Study

The surveys were designed to protect the anonymity of respondents. Therefore, participants' academic institutions were not recorded. Many tenure issues may be related to specific institutional and administrative climates. It is possible survey results could unfairly represent one institution over another, depending on the ratio of respondents from that institution. Future studies should address the issue of representative sampling. In addition, the survey only measured those currently in a tenure-track or tenured position. Therefore, no data was gathered from those that may have left the profession or failed to obtain tenure at their institution. For a true picture of the affect of child-bearing and child-rearing decisions, a survey of those who did not successfully gain promotion and tenure or who chose to leave tenure-track positions would be needed.

The survey did not collect data specifically on same-sex partnerships. In retrospect, including a data gathering mechanism for this group would have been illustrative and constructive for a true picture of librarianship and family life. Any additional studies should include data for this group. Additionally, survey questions did not measure financial stability and family support systems, both possible factors in child-bearing decisions. Because the study was focused on child-bearing decisions and the P&T process, it purposefully targeted those with children ages 0-6 years. Further studies could explore the relationship between raising school-age children and the promotion and

tenure process. Moreover, the current study did not address the unique circumstances of parents raising special needs children. Future research should investigate how librarians with special needs children balance family responsibilities with career requirements and development. Other family care commitments could also be explored, such as elder care.

Furthermore, the authors asked respondents if female faculty should receive additional support if they choose to have children. There were a number of respondents who reacted strongly, occasionally accusing the authors of sexist and antiquated ideas of womanhood. This survey question was drawn from the literature review. Rather than reflecting gender stereotyping by the authors, it was designed to elicit participant's gender-related views on the issue, if any. It was also meant to elicit views on accommodations for the additional time that female faculty may require for physical recovery after giving birth. Future studies could explore perceptions and conceptualizations of gender equality in librarianship and what implications these perceptions have on both fatherhood and motherhood.

The surveys used in this study were extensive and provided a multitude of data. There was additional data on family leave policies, perceptions on these policies, and their relationship to tenure status, gender and family status. Future articles will present additional data and further explore the issues of parenthood, professorship and librarianship.

Conclusions

The data obtained from these surveys is just a starting point for the discussion about librarianship, tenure and parenthood. It did not uncover at what age librarians were going through the tenure-track process, or if that age corresponded to child-bearing years. However, there was relatively small number (27%) of respondents who had young children during the tenure-track years. Whether this group is small due to the maternal age of tenure-track librarians or by personal choice, we do know that parents of young children are not well represented in tenure-track faculty positions. If very few colleagues have been through the simultaneous processes of tenure and parenthood, these parents may not feel they have the support or understanding to address their concerns. If the profession wishes to continue to attract young professionals, the issues of career and parenthood should be openly and honestly discussed.

How does academic librarianship measure against other disciplines? Finkel and Olswang found that 56% of female assistant professors had children. Their subjects crossed all disciplines within one research university.²⁶ This number is much greater than the 43% of academic librarians with children overall, and the 27% of librarians with young children during the tenure-track years found in this study. It is surprising that librarians in this study had fewer children than faculty in other disciplines considering that librarianship is a feminized field. In addition, librarians do not need a PhD to enter into assistant professor ranks, whereas a doctoral degree is necessary in most other fields. This would suggest that librarians may enter into the profession earlier in their child-bearing years than academic faculty with PhDs. Whether a majority of librarians are entering into tenure-track positions during their child-bearing years needs to be studied.

The present study indicates that very few librarians reported postponing having children due to the pressures of promotion and tenure. However, the survey data collected also shows that women were significantly more likely than their male colleagues to postpone having children and untenured women were more likely to believe that child-bearing and rearing would negatively impact their ability to obtain promotion and tenure. Despite being one of the only female dominated academic disciplines, librarianship has not overcome issues endemic to academia. Female faculty still have more fear than their male colleagues that their personal family choices will negatively impact their career path. More work is needed in support of a congruent path between tenure-track librarianship and motherhood and more empirical evidence is needed on the effect of children on successful tenure applications.

Even though untenured women indicated that child-bearing and rearing could negatively impact their P&T process, gender did not play a significant role in the perception that taking family leave would be a disadvantage in the P&T process. Indeed, issues of gender equality and gender equity were prevalent in descriptive comments, with many respondents quite opposed to any gender difference in policy and/or procedures. Even women who supported the idea that female faculty had more difficulty opposed the idea that women alone should receive additional forms of institutional support. Instead those with children and those on tenure-track, those who are most affected by this issue, more strongly supported the modification of the P&T system in support of child-bearing and rearing. These two groups would be most affected by changes to the P&T system, either

in support of their current family situation or in support of starting a family while on tenure-track.

The study has implications for academic libraries and the larger university audience. The message is clear that there is still a sense of discrepancy between parenthood and professor-hood in librarianship. If the profession wishes to continue to attract and retain young professionals, issues of family life need to be discussed openly and policies made clear. Library leaders and administrators should take an active role in initiating environmental and policy change. Tenure-track librarians need to be reassured that they do not have to choose between parenthood and professor-hood. Practical approaches could include workshops, mentoring programs, flexible scheduling programs, and support groups. Some of these programs currently exist, but do not specifically address the issue of parenting in a tenure-track environment. The addition of a family-friendly component to any of these already existing programs is an easy adjustment. Consider pairing a successfully tenured faculty parent with a tenure-track parent as a mentor; hold a panel discussion of successful parent/professors during new faculty orientation sessions; form a support group for faculty parents at the library or campus level that includes a babysitting share program; or institute a job-share program for faculty that need time for maternity or family-leave care. Faculty must also be assured that their participation in programs will not be harmful to their career. Most importantly, the dialogue must begin. As a female dominated discipline, librarians can open the doors to this discussion for their campus communities.

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Chart 1
Librarians with children ages 0-6 during tenure-track years
N=264

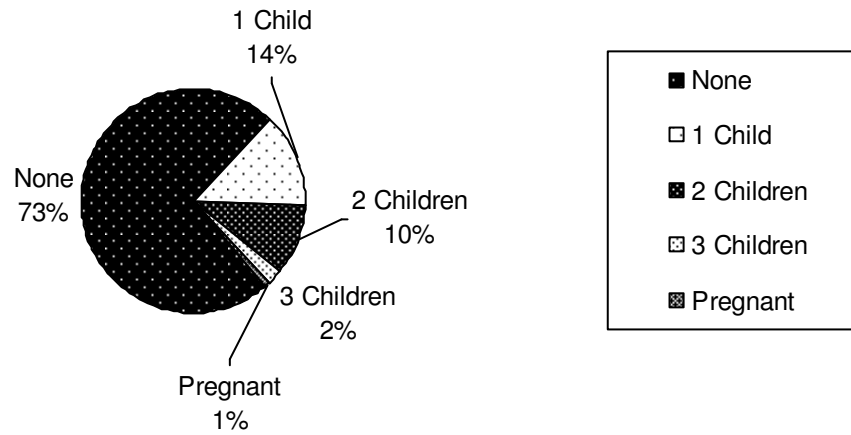


TABLE 1 Gender difference in impact of P&T on the child-bearing decisions

Question	Gender	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Impact on the child-bearing decision	Female	49	2.39	1.35	68	-2.21	.030*
	Male	21	1.67	.97			
	Total	70	2.17	1.26			

* $p < .05$

TABLE 2 Paired *t*-test of perceptions before and after P&T

Question	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Perception of having children before P&T	40	2.50	1.41	39	2.82	.008**
Perception of having children after P&T	40	2.18	1.34			

***p* < .01

TABLE 3 Gender difference in perceptions before and after P&T

Question	Gender	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Perception of having children before P&T	Female	24	2.88	1.45	38	2.15	.038*
	Male	16	1.94	1.18			
	Total	40	2.50	1.41			
Perception of having children after P&T	Female	24	2.42	1.44	38	1.42	.164
	Male	16	1.81	1.11			
	Total	40	2.18	1.34			

* $p < .05$

TABLE 4 Independent *t*-test of perceptions based on gender, family status and tenure status

Question	Groups	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Family leave program	Gender						
	Female	199	2.76	.95	258	1.81	.072
	Male	61	2.51	1.03			
	Family status						
	w children	116	2.65	.95	259	.81	.417
	w/o children	145	2.74	.98			
	Tenure status						
	Tenured	132	2.57	.99	259	-2.26	.025*
	Tenure-track	129	2.84	.93			
	Total	261	2.70	.97			
Gender & difficulty	Gender						
	Female	198	3.30	1.14	257	-1.72	.088
	Male	61	3.02	1.13			
	Family status						
	w children	71	3.59	1.13	257	-3.13	.002**
	w/o children	188	3.10	1.13			
	Tenure status						
	Tenured	132	3.17	1.21	258	-.81	.420
	Tenure-track	128	3.29	1.08			
	Total	260	3.23	1.15			
Modification	Gender						
	Female	197	3.30	1.22	254	-.53	.594
	Male	59	3.20	1.19			
	Family status						
	w children	70	3.61	1.20	254	2.76	.006**
	w/o children	186	3.15	1.20			
	Tenure status						
	Tenured	132	3.03	1.17	255	-3.35	.001***
	Tenure-track	125	3.53	1.21			
	Total	257	3.28	1.21			

NOTE: w=with, w/o=without.

p* < .05 *p* < .01 ****p* < .001

APPENDIX A

Family and Tenure Survey - Children

Please fill out this survey if you have children and are in a tenured or tenure-track library position.

What is your age?

☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 51+

What is your gender?

☐ Female ☐ Male

What is your marital status?

☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced

What is your race?

☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Hispanic
☐ Native American
☐ Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Other (please describe):

Which of the following best describes your status?

☐ U.S. citizen
☐ Permanent resident/green-card
☐ H1 working visa
☐ Other (please describe):

What is your job title?

Check all that apply to your institution.

☐ Public university/college
☐ Private university/college
☐ Large academic library
☐ Small academic library
☐ Other (please describe):

How many librarians does your library employ?

☐ <10 ☐ 10-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ >40

How many support staff does your library employ?

☐ <10 ☐ 10-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61-70 ☐ >70

Which of the following describes your status? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Tenured
- ☐ Tenure-track
- ☐ Faculty status
- ☐ No faculty status
- ☐ Professorship status
- ☐ No professorship status

Of the following, check all that are required to achieve promotion and/or tenure at your institution.

- ☐ Publications in peer-reviewed journals
- ☐ Publications in non peer-reviewed materials
- ☐ Presentations and poster sessions
- ☐ Service on national committees
- ☐ Service on regional committees
- ☐ Service on state committees
- ☐ Service on local committees
- ☐ Bibliographic instruction
- ☐ Credit courses
- ☐ Leadership (chairing of committees, administrative responsibilities, etc.)
- ☐ Job performance
- ☐ Outreach
- ☐ Other (please describe):

How many children do you have?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ Other (please describe):

How many children did you have ages 0-6 while you were tenure-track?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ Other (please describe):

Promotion and tenure had/has an impact on my decision to have children.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Did you postpone having children due to the constraints of gaining promotion and/or tenure?

Yes No

Are you postponing having additional children due to the constraints of gaining promotion and/or tenure?

☐ Yes ☐ No

I regret choosing to postpone having children due to promotion and/or tenure.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
☐ I did not postpone having children.

Before receiving promotion and/or tenure, I felt or currently feel that having children is a hindrance to gaining promotion and/or tenure?

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

After receiving promotion and/or tenure, I feel as if having children was a hindrance.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ I have not received promotion and/or tenure

I am familiar with my institution's family leave program(s).

Strongly agree Agree Don't know Disagree Strongly disagree

My institution offers the following for family leave (check all that apply).

☐ Campus daycare
☐ Flexible scheduling
☐ Generous maternity leave (in excess of 8 weeks)
☐ Leave of absence
☐ Maternity leave (6 weeks)
☐ Reappointment to temporary non-faculty status
☐ Stopping the tenure clock
☐ Subsidized daycare
☐ Support groups
☐ Supervisor support
☐ Tough it out
☐ I don't know
☐ Other (please describe):

I feel that those who make use of my institution's family leave program(s) are at a disadvantage in the promotion and/or tenure process.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Please briefly explain your response to above question.

I took advantage of the following when having children (check all that apply).

☐ Campus daycare
☐ Flexible scheduling
☐ Generous maternity leave (in excess of 8 weeks)
☐ Leave of absence
☐ Reappointment to temporary non-faculty status
☐ Stopping the tenure clock
☐ Subsidized daycare
☐ Support groups

- ☐ Supervisor support
- ☐ Tough it out
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other (please describe):

I think the following would be ideal for family leave (check all that apply).

- ☐ Campus daycare
- ☐ Flexible scheduling
- ☐ Generous maternity leave (in excess of 8 weeks)
- ☐ Leave of absence
- ☐ Reappointment to temporary non-faculty status
- ☐ Stopping the tenure clock
- ☐ Subsidized daycare
- ☐ Support groups
- ☐ Supervisor support
- ☐ Tough it out
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other (please describe):

I believe that female tenure-track faculty have more difficulty gaining promotion and/or tenure if they choose to have children than do their male colleagues who choose to have children.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Please explain your response to the above question. Why do you feel this way?

I believe the promotion and/or tenure system should be modified to support faculty who choose to start families.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

I believe female tenure-track faculty should receive more support for family leave than their male colleagues when having children.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Please share some of your concerns in gaining promotion and/or tenure while raising a family.

Please share some of your successful stories on raising a family while in a tenured or tenure-track library position.

APEENDIX B

Family and Tenure Survey - No Children

Please fill out this survey if you do NOT have children and are in a tenured or tenure-track library position.

What is your age?

☐ 20-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 51+

What is your gender?

☐ Female ☐ Male

What is your marital status?

☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced

What is your race?

☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Hispanic
☐ Native American
☐ Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Other (please describe):

Which of the following best describes your status?

☐ U.S. citizen
☐ Permanent resident/green-card
☐ H1 working visa
☐ Other (please describe):

What is your job title?

Check all that apply to your institution.

☐ Public university/college
☐ Private university/college
☐ Large academic library
☐ Small academic library
☐ Other (please describe):

How many librarians does your library employ?

☐ <10 ☐ 10-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ >40

How many support staff does your library employ?

☐ <10 ☐ 10-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61-70 ☐ >70

Which of the following describes your status? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Tenured
- ☐ Tenure-track
- ☐ Faculty status
- ☐ No faculty status
- ☐ Professorship status
- ☐ No professorship status
- ☐ Other (please describe):

Of the following, check all that are required to achieve promotion and/or tenure at your institution.

- ☐ Publications in peer-reviewed journals
- ☐ Publications in non peer-reviewed materials
- ☐ Presentations and poster sessions
- ☐ Service on national committees
- ☐ Service on regional committees
- ☐ Service on state committees
- ☐ Service on local committees
- ☐ Bibliographic instruction
- ☐ Credit courses
- ☐ Leadership (chairing of committees, administrative responsibilities, etc.)
- ☐ Job performance
- ☐ Outreach
- ☐ Other (please describe):

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ I chose not to have children due to the constraints of promotion and/or tenure.
- ☐ I am choosing to postpone having children due to the constraints of promotion and/or tenure.
- ☐ Promotion and/or tenure is not the primary reason I chose not to have children.
- ☐ Promotion and/or tenure is not the primary reason I am choosing to postpone having children.
- ☐ Promotion and/or tenure is one of several reasons I have not had children.
- ☐ I haven't thought about children yet or do not want to have any.
- ☐ Other (please describe):

I regret choosing not to have children or postponing having children due to promotion and/or tenure.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Promotion and/or tenure did not have a bearing on my decision.

I am familiar with my institution's family leave program(s).

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Somewhat ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

My institution offers the following for family leave (check all that apply).

- ☐ Campus daycare
- ☐ Flexible scheduling
- ☐ Generous maternity leave (in excess of 8 weeks)
- ☐ Leave of absence
- ☐ Maternity leave (6 weeks)
- ☐ Reappointment to temporary non-faculty status
- ☐ Stopping the tenure clock
- ☐ Subsidized daycare
- ☐ Support groups
- ☐ Supervisor support
- ☐ Tough it out
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other (please describe):

I feel that those who make use of my institution's family leave program(s) are at a disadvantage in the promotion and/or tenure process.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Please briefly explain your response to question.

I think the following would be ideal for family leave (check all that apply).

- ☐ Campus daycare
- ☐ Flexible scheduling
- ☐ Generous maternity leave (in excess of 8 weeks)
- ☐ Leave of absence
- ☐ Reappointment to temporary non-faculty status
- ☐ Stopping the tenure clock
- ☐ Subsidized daycare
- ☐ Support groups
- ☐ Supervisor support
- ☐ Tough it out
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Other (please describe):

I believe that female tenure-track faculty have more difficulty gaining promotion and/or tenure if they choose to have children than do their male colleagues who choose to have children.

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Please explain your response to the above question. Why do you feel this way?

I believe the promotion and/or tenure system should be modified to support faculty who choose to start families.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

I believe female tenure-track faculty should receive more support for family leave than their male colleagues when having children.

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Don't know ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Please share any stories or comments on the impact of the promotion and/or tenure system on family life.